

accepted that General Handy is the pre-eminent mobility and logistics expert in the Department of Defense.

In November 2001 General Handy assumed command of US TRANS COM at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois. USTRANSCOM is one of nine unified combatant commands and executes mobility combat operations through its three component commands: The Air Force's IAMC, the Navy's Military Sealift Command, MSC, and the Army's Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, SDDC. General Handy has had the unique distinction of simultaneously commanding both USTRANSCOM and its air component command, AMC. USTRANSCOM provides the synchronized transportation, distribution, and sustainment which projects and maintains our national power. As a global combatant commander, General Handy has made supporting the American warfighter his top priority.

Since the tragic events of September 11, 2001, USTRANSCOM, under General Handy's leadership, has moved over 2.4 million passengers, 6.4 million short tons of cargo, and 2.8 billion gallons of fuel in support of the Global War on Terrorism, including Operation Noble Eagle, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom. To put this in perspective, the passenger movement is equivalent to moving the entire population of Kansas while the cargo movement is equivalent to moving over 70 Washington Monuments halfway around the world. General Handy, an avid NASCAR racing fan, is fond of stating the amount of fuel moved could run the Nextel Cup Series for the next 19,473 years.

America truly has a military deployment and distribution system that is unmatched anywhere in the world. America's military might moves with USTRANSCOM, but so too does its heart. As quick as we are to defend this great nation, Americans are just as quick to assist those in need; and when we do, we turn to the remarkable capabilities of USTRANSCOM. Under General Handy's command, USTRANSCOM has provided humanitarian relief to hurricane victims in the United States, earthquake victims in Iran, and tsunami victims in South Asia, just to name a few. The medicines, supplies, equipment, and personnel that USTRANSCOM delivered to these and other natural disasters ultimately saved lives and eased human suffering.

In addition to conducting the largest military movement since World War II and providing unparalleled humanitarian relief, General Handy has made it a priority to transform our Nation's deployment and distribution system, ensuring our ability to project national power where needed with the greatest speed and agility, the highest efficiency, and the most reliable level of trust and accuracy. As the USTRANSCOM commander, General Handy actively took on the role of the Distribution Process Owner for DOD, charged with improving efficiency and interoperability across the entire DOD supply chain. His initiative to develop Joint Deployment and Distribution Operations Centers, JDDOCs, in each of the regional combatant commands continues to improve combat capability and save valuable resources. Regional Combatant Commanders can now plug into the DOD supply chain system, track their requirements, and prioritize their actions. The net result is that troops and equipment are now arriving to the battlefield faster and at less cost. While meeting the

needs of the warfighter, General Handy's Distribution Process Owner improvements have generated almost one-half billion dollars in cost avoidances and savings in the global war on terror.

General Handy will be the first to tell you he did not accomplish these feats alone. General Handy has led the way in seeking collaborative joint solutions to today's complex combat issues. Those who worked for him and with him, military and civilians from every branch of Service, will miss his leadership and mentorship. They'll miss the stories and humor he used to get his message across. We in Congress will miss his straightforward approach and sound counsel. The nation will miss his devotion to duty, ceaseless drive for improvement, and unwavering support to the American warfighter.

General Handy will be remembered as the man who brilliantly led our Nation's mobility forces during the Global War on Terrorism. I know we speak on behalf of our colleagues and a grateful nation in saying thank you to General Handy and his wife, Mickey, for their years of service and sacrifice. General Handy, we wish you well in all your future endeavors and pray that those who follow in your footsteps may continue the legacy of unprecedented support to our great Nation. Good luck and Godspeed.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2361,
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED
AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2005

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the conference agreement on the Department of Interior Appropriations, H.R. 2361, because it addresses urgent needs within our veterans' health care system. Last month, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced a \$1.3 billion shortfall in funding for veterans' medical care, and it is estimated that in FY 2006 this shortfall could grow. This is unacceptable. With thousands of new veterans entering our health care system every year—including those that have fought in Iraq, Afghanistan and the global war on terrorism—we must provide the resources they need and deserve, as well as continuing to provide for those who came before them. This bill provides \$1.5 billion in emergency funding in FY 2005 for veterans health care and keeps our promise to those who have so honorably served our nation.

This bill also provides a \$5 million increase for the National Endowment for the Arts. I support this investment in our artistic resources. It enhances the richness of Minnesota and our nation's cultural legacy and allows participation in the arts by many who would not otherwise have the opportunity.

Regrettably, this bill falls short on supporting the federal programs that conserve our environment and protect the public's health. This bill cuts funding for the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund by 17 percent. This fund allows states to allocate funds for local water

and sewage treatment projects. St. Paul Regional Water Services recently applied for Clean Water funds for a water filtration project and were denied because there wasn't enough funding.

Funding for the National Park Service is also cut by three percent. These dollars are used to protect our national treasures like Voyageurs, Yosemite and Yellowstone National Parks. The maintenance backlog at our National Parks has increased from \$4.9 billion in 2000, when President Bush pledged to eliminate the backlog, to \$7.1 billion today. We should give the Park Service the resources to maintain these national treasures instead of slipping farther and farther behind in unmet maintenance needs.

I am pleased to support our nation's honored veterans. Unfortunately, while this bill could have done so much more to keep our families and communities strong and healthy and protect our nation's cherished natural resources for generations to come, this Congress failed to make the environment and public health a priority.

NATIONAL HEALTH CENTER WEEK

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 6, 2005

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the goals and ideals of National Health Center Week. I also wish to recognize the Will County Community Health Center which is one of Illinois' largest and most comprehensive public health agencies. The Will County Community Health Center has served Will County in my 11th Congressional District since 1942 and became a Federally Qualified Health Center in 1997. They annually care for more than 48,000 medically underserved county residents.

On July 25, 2005, House Resolution 289, of which I am co-sponsor, passed the U.S. House of Representatives. House Resolution 289 reads as follows:

Whereas community, migrant, public housing, and homeless health centers are non-profit, community owned and operated health providers and are vital to the Nation's communities;

Whereas there are more than 1,000 such health centers servicing more than 15,000,000 people in over 3,600 communities;

Whereas such health centers have provided cost-effective, high quality health care to the Nation's poor and medically underserved (including the working poor, the uninsured, and many high-risk and vulnerable populations), acting as a vital safety net in the Nation's health delivery system;

Whereas these health centers provide care to 1 of every 7 uninsured individuals, 1 of every 9 Medicaid beneficiaries, 1 of every 7 people of color, and 1 of every 9 rural Americans, all of whom would otherwise lack access to health care;

Whereas these health centers are engaged with other innovative programs in primary and preventive care to reach out to over 621,000 homeless persons and more than 709,000 farm workers;

Whereas these health centers make health care responsive and cost-effective by integrating the delivery of primary care mammograms, and glaucoma screenings;

Whereas in communities served by these health centers, infant mortality rates have been reduced over the past 4 years even as infant mortality rates across the country have risen;

Whereas these health centers are built by community initiative, and run by the patients they serve;

Whereas Federal grants provide seed money empowering communities to find partners and resources to recruit doctors and needed health professionals;

Whereas Federal grants on average contribute 25 % of such a health center's budget, with the remainder provided by State and local governments, Medicare, Medicaid, private contributions, private insurance, and patient fees;

Whereas there are more than 100 health centers that receive no Federal grant funding, yet continue to serve their communities regardless of their patients' ability to pay;

Whereas health centers tailor their services to fit the special needs and priorities of their communities, working together with schools, businesses, churches, community organizations, foundations, and State and local governments;

Whereas health centers contribute to the health and well-being of their communities by keeping children healthy and in school and helping adults remain productive and on the job;

Whereas health centers encourage citizen participation and provide jobs for nearly 100,000 community residents; and

Whereas National Health Center Week raises awareness of the health services provided by health centers: Now, therefore be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Health Center Week; and

(2) requests that the President issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe the week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

Mr. Speaker, I urge this body to identify and recognize Health Departments in their own districts whose actions have so greatly benefited and strengthened America's families and communities.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 6, 2005

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, July 21, 2005, the U.S. House of Representatives considered numerous amendments to H.R. 3199, a bill to reauthorize the Patriot Act. While I did vote on a number of these amendments earlier in the day and week, I had to depart D.C. on the afternoon of July 21, 2005, and travel to New Orleans to attend and testify before a Base Realignment and Closure meeting. I was granted an official leave of absence by unanimous consent on July 22, 2005 (see 151 Cong. Rec. H6376-01). I was absent during consideration of the following votes. If present, I would have voted the following:

1. Rollcall vote No. 409 (Berman Amendment)—No.

2. Rollcall vote No. 410 (Schiff Amendment)—Yes.

3. Rollcall vote No. 411 (Hart Amendment)—Yes.

4. Rollcall vote No. 412 (Jackson-Lee Amendment)—No.

5. Rollcall vote No. 413 (Boucher Amendment)—No.

6. Rollcall vote No. 414 (Final Passage)—Yes.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 6, 2005

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, September 6, 2005, the U.S. House of Representatives considered the following pieces of legislation: (1) H. Res. 360—Commemorating the 60th anniversary of V-J Day and the end of World War II in the Pacific; and (2) S.J. Res. 19—A joint resolution calling upon the President to issue a proclamation recognizing the 30th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act. Unfortunately, I was absent and unable to vote for these two pieces of legislation, as I was attending to and assisting my constituents and their needs in the Third Congressional District of Mississippi after the devastating destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina on Monday, August 29, 2005. I have requested an official leave of absence for this time. If present, I would have voted "aye" for both resolutions.